

For Joseph Gates

With the respectful regards of

EULOGY
of Lisle Smith

UPON THE

LIFE, CHARACTER AND SERVICES

OF

HENRY CLAY.

PRONOUNCED BEFORE THE COMMON COUNCIL AND
CITIZENS OF CHICAGO, JULY 20, 1852.

BY S. LISLE SMITH, ESQ.

SECOND EDITION.

PUBLISHED BY S. C. GRIGGS & CO.

CHICAGO:
DAILY JOURNAL OFFICE PRINT.
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CORRESPONDENCE.

CHICAGO, JULY 21st, 1852.

S. LISLE SMITH, Esq. :—

DEAR SIR :—The undersigned, believing that the publication of the Eulogy pronounced by you, on the occasion of the Funeral Obsequies of Henry Clay at Chicago, on the 20th inst., would be highly satisfactory to our citizens, and the public generally, would, on behalf of themselves, and the other members of the Joint Committee of Arrangements, respectfully request a copy for the purpose indicated.

Very truly Yours,

J. L. JAMES,
J. H. KINZIE,
I. N. ARNOLD,
U. P. HARRIS,

H. G. SHUMWAY,
A. J. BROWN,
ARNO VOSS,
ISAAC COOK,

JOHN ROGERS.

CHICAGO, JULY 22d, 1852.

GENTLEMEN :—Your letter, requesting a copy of the Eulogy pronounced by myself upon Mr. Clay, for publication, is received.

Thanking you for the manner in which you are pleased to speak of the humble tribute referred to, I herewith transmit you a copy of the same.

Very truly,

S. LISLE SMITH.

J. L. JAMES, H. G. SHUMWAY, U. P. HARRIS, Esqs., and others.

EULOGY.

"In Rama there was a voice heard—lamentation and weeping, and great mourning :—Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not."

Mourn—Sons and Daughters of America!—mourn. A great light has gone out. A bright star has disappeared from the horizon. A glorious Sun has gone down in the West—never again in our world to rise.

Mourn—Statesmen of America!—mourn! One of the wisest and most experienced of your number, that have graced the annals of our history, has joined the great and the good, in the world above.

Mourn—Patriots of America! The soul of one of our country's noblest sons, has winged its flight to the Spirit Land.

Mourn—Philanthropist and lovers of Liberty throughout the world—a great benefactor of his race has been gathered to his Fathers. Mourn—for HENRY CLAY is dead!

Already have the chambers of our Legislative Halls been clad with the drapery of mourning;—already have the associates of his trials and conquests, in the great arena of his intellectual conflicts, paid the last tribute of affection to the memory of the mighty dead. Already has the solemn procession wended its way through our crowded cities, our busy towns, our smiling villages—amid tolling bells, and booming cannon; and with thousands of torches illuminating the darkness of midnight, bearing the lifeless remains to the silent city of the dead. Already have thousands, and tens of thousands of freemen gazed upon the lineaments of the great departed, and fain would "beg a hair of him for memory." Already has the full heart of the American people exclaimed—

" Bear hence his body,
And mourn you for him. Let him be regarded
As the noblest corpse that ever herald
Did follow to his Urn."

Already have been spoken the solemn words—"Dust to dust—ashes to ashes—earth to earth!" The shroud, the coffin, the sepulchre, are all that now remains of Henry Clay. All that remains, did I say? God forbid!—"His fame survives—bounded only by the limits of the earth, and by the extent of the human mind. He survives in our hearts—in the growing knowledge of our children—in the affections of the good throughout the world." And when the walls of our Capitol shall have crumbled into dust—when nations now existing shall be no more—or shall only live in history, like Assyria, or Babylon, or ancient Greece, *his* name will not die, until love of virtue ceases on earth—but his name and his fame will grow brighter and brighter, until earth itself sinks into chaos, and until circling moons shall wax and wane no more.

Our whole nation mourns. It is like a family bereaved of its head. Political animosities are forgotten. Parties but lately arrayed in bitter hostility against each other, now meet to mingle their tears o'er the grave of the illustrious dead. *All* feel that a great link that connected us with the days of our country's early history, has been severed; that a void, an aching void, is created in our Nation's Council; that another great man has fallen in Israel; "that the strong staff is broken, and the beautiful rod."

Were it not that the light of civilization and revelation has dawned upon our path-way; were it not that we are travelers and pilgrims through this vale of tears; were it not that this life is but the commencement of an infinite existence; were it not that we are taught by Holy Writ, that "the days of our years are three score years and ten—and if by reason of strength they be four score, yet is their strength labor and sorrow," we might in the fullness of our overflowing hearts, be tempted to exclaim—

"Hung be the Heavens with black—yield day to night!
Comets, importing change of times and states—
Brandish your crystal tresses in the sky;
And with them scourge the bad, revolting stars,
That have consented unto HENRY'S death!"

We are here, fellow citizens, with mourning spirits, to pay the last tribute of affection to the memory of our departed Statesman. But amid our sorrow, let us not forget that stricken one, now beside that desolate hearth, who feels this bereavement with an intensity that has no parallel in the national sorrow. This blow has fallen with untold unguish upon the head of the aged widow, whose hoary locks and trembling limbs,

admonish her and us, that the time of her departure is near at hand.

We are told that "when David returned in triumph to Jerusalem, he invited the aged Barazilli to go up and reside with him at Court, but he declined it on account of his age and infirmities, and begged the King to take his son in his place.

In the same spirit, this venerable and excellent matron, sending one of her children to the Capitol, chose rather to remain in her retirement, than to share the honors awarded to her distinguished husband. She well knew that the sands of his hour-glass were gradually dropping away; that anxiety and public care were rapidly wasting his strength; that the hand of disease was upon him; but *duty* called him away from the joys of that fire-side—and she well knew that he always obeyed that call. She bade him the last farewell. Oh what must be the sorrow of that aged companion of his joys and sorrows?"* Upon the sanctity of that grief I cannot trespass.

The Grecian painter, though he could display on the glowing canvass the manly sympathy of Achilles, and the stubborn grief of Ulysses, threw a veil o'er grief that could not be portrayed. Language is inadequate to depict that great affliction; but let us commend her to the God of the Widow, and let our aspirations ascend, that her pathway to the tomb be smoothed—that the Comforter will bind up the broken heart, pour oil and wine into the bleeding bosom, and give her "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

"Eulogy has mistaken her province and her powers, when she assumes for her theme" the glory of Henry Clay. It was the beautiful remark of the Poet—

"Would you praise Cæsar, say—Cæsar, *go no farther.*"

The deeds and the virtues of Henry Clay are his high eulogiums; his deeds most familiar to your memory—his virtues most dear to your affections. To me, therefore there is nothing permitted but to borrow from yourselves; and although a pencil more daring than mine would languish in attempting to retrace the living lines which the finger of truth has drawn upon your hearts, you will bear with me whilst, on a subject which dignifies everything related to it,

"I tell what you yourselves do know."

To the philosophical observer of the human race, it would appear, that

*Sermon of H. A. Boardman, on the death of Wm. Henry Harrison.

the *gratitude* of mankind should be drawn to their benefactors; that *all* should love to honor those, who, by a long life of untiring devotion to their country's good, have adorned the age and the country in which their lot was cast. A number of these have successively arisen, no more distinguished by the lustre of their talents, than by the elevation of their virtues. Of those, however, who were born and acted through life as if they acted not for themselves, but for their country, and the whole human race, how few are recorded in the long annals of ages, and how wide the intervals of time and space that divide them? In all the dreary length of way, they appear, as has been beautifully remarked, "like five or six light-houses, in as many thousand weary miles of coast. They gleam upon the surrounding darkness with unextinguishable splendor, like stars seen through a mist," to guide and direct the weary mariner, when tossed upon the billows of an uncertain ocean.

In our day and generation, *one* such benefactor has been vouchsafed to us—one whose whole life was that of unselfish aspiration—one whose patriotism has burnt as pure and bright as the vestal's flame—one upon the drama of whose life the curtain has just fallen.

On the 12th day of April, A. D., 1777, Henry Clay was born. The son of a poor Baptist clergyman, he was early deprived by death of the counsels of his father, and was left to the care of a widowed mother. She trained him to a *love of truth*, and cultivated that high, moral sense, for which he has ever been distinguished.

In no position in life, does the character of this world-renowned Statesman appear to better advantage, than when, to the eye of memory, he is seen, as the "Mill Boy of the Slashes," trudging to mill, and discharging those filial duties, to which he was so devoted.

And here let me, in passing, refer for a moment to a fact, that bears most honorable testimony to the holy influence of a mother. In casting our eyes over the history of our country, we cannot fail to be struck with the circumstance, that a very large proportion of the eminent men who have adorned our annals, were left at a tender age to the care of *widowed mothers*.

"This tell to mothers; what a holy charge
Is their's; with what a kingly power their love
Might rule the fountain of the new-born mind;
Warn them to wake at early dawn, and sow
Good seeds before the world doth sow its tares."

At the early age of twenty he obtained a license for the practice of the

Law. The field that presented itself in his native State, was too narrow for the exercise of his ambition, or the avenues to success were too crowded. He saw the germ of future power in the pathless forests and boundless prairies of the western world; and hitherward, with no friend but his own right arm, with no wealth but an unsullied character, he came a youthful pioneer; or, to use the graphic and touching language of Chief Justice Robinson—"He came leaning alone on Providence, a widowed mother's prayers, and the untutored talents with which God had blessed him."

Kentucky was not then as now, the garden of our land. Those lovely meadows were not then as now, waving with the fruits of agriculture. The song of the reaper was not then resounding o'er those beautiful harvest fields, that now excite the admiration of the traveler or the stranger. Those flowery wood pastures were not then reclaimed by the industry of man. No! that gallant State was then known as the "battle-field and hunting-ground of the red man." There, the numerous tribes of savages who roamed through our land, assembled to chase the bounding doe, or to meet the hostile array; and there pealed the horrid war-whoop, the signal of devastation and of death. Each licking, at which the antlered stag came to slake his thirst, was reddened by the blood of the red man. Each mound contained the bones of the massacred and the murdered. Toil, danger and privation, were to be the companions of the youthful pioneer; but these he heeded not, for well did he know that the toils and sorrows of youth, like the rains of spring, would produce the rich harvests of manhood.

The political career of this distinguished Statesman commenced at a peculiarly interesting period of our history. The people of Kentucky were about forming a new Constitution, and the State was convulsed by the efforts of contending factions. At this early stage, the same voice that afterward pleaded the cause of struggling freemen—the same voice that inspired the patriot of South America, and cheered the heart of the struggling Greek, was raised on behalf of the down-trodden and oppressed African. An interesting feature in the new Constitution, was a proposition *for prospective emancipation*. Dr. Franklin had proposed a similar plan in Pennsylvania; and his profound sagacity and enlightened wisdom, can now be discerned, in the general prosperity and happiness of the people of the Key-stone State.

Much is said in our day of the evil and moral guilt of slavery; and many are the plans presented to the consideration of the philanthropist

for the abolition, the peaceful abolition, of this admitted evil. So delicate however, is the question, under the peculiar relations of the Federal Constitution, that there is no subject, that more agitates the minds of the reflecting portion of our people, than to discover a plan—a certain and peaceful method of wiping out the foul blot upon our national escutcheon. The feeling, however, in reference to the moral guilt of slavery, has been but of late years enkindled. Rush, Rawle, Lafayette, and Wilberforce, were the first pioneers in the cause of emancipation; and few were the followers enlisted under the banners of those gifted champions of human rights. HENRY CLAY WAS ONE. Is it therefore claiming too much to say, that a young advocate of liberty, who, in the latter part of the last century, boldly encounters the passions and prejudices that hem in the “peculiar institution,” and fearlessly proclaims prospective emancipation as a principle of the organic law, is entitled to a rank higher among the benefactors of his race? If the counsels of Henry Clay had been regarded, Kentucky would now have been a *free* State; and slavery, with its blight and its mildew, would soon be banished from its borders.

He was, whilst but in the bloom of early manhood, twice elected to the United States Senate, to serve the residue of terms rendered vacant by the resignation of his predecessors; and in the year 1811, he was elected to the House of Representatives. On his first appearance in that body, he was elected Speaker. This, I believe, is the only instance on record, where any individual has been elevated to the third office in the Government, who has not been, prior to his election, a member of the House over which he was called to preside, and was a signal compliment to the rising greatness of the great Statesman of the West. Without any disparagement to the many distinguished citizens who have discharged the duties of Speaker, it may safely be said, that no one ever discharged those high and responsible duties with more manly impartiality and ability than Henry Clay; and the fact, that no decision of the Speaker was ever reversed by the House, is a striking proof of the confidence of the House in their presiding officer.

Time will not allow me to recapitulate the eminent services rendered to the country by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The Republican party at that time had a majority in both branches of the National Legislature.

Macon, Gaston, Cheeves, Calhoun, Lowndes, and a host of other eminent men, sustained the administration of Mr. Madison. Among these, proudly conspicuous, stood HENRY CLAY. The injuries inflicted on our

commerce by the British Order in Council—the impressment of our seamen—the influence of British Agents in exciting the western tribes of Indians to deeds of midnight massacre and murder, had produced a powerful feeling of indignation in our land. Merchantmen plundered and confiscated on the highway of nations; seven thousand American citizens pining in foreign prisons, or condemned to a fate more hard—compelled to bear arms against their own brothers; hundreds of blazing and burning cabins; thousands of scalped and violated victims of Indian barbarity, called in tones of thrilling power upon the American people, to rise in defense of their dearest rights. Forbearance ceased to be a virtue. The non-importation, the non-intercourse, the embargo, had been tried, but without success; nothing was left for a gallant people, but an appeal to the God of Battles.

In the galaxy of distinguished men who participated in the debates of that day, no one manifested a loftier patriotism, or displayed a more chivalric courage, than the Speaker of the House of Representatives. In the very midst of that strife his noble plume was seen waving in the battle's van—and his voice sounded like a clarion, calling upon the patriots of the land to rally around the standard of their country. Listen to it:—

“The colors that float at the mast-head shall be the credentials of our seamen. * * * * In such a cause, with the aid of Providence, we must come out, crowned with success; but if we fail, let us fail like men; lash ourselves to our gallant tars, and expire in one common struggle, fighting for Free Trade and Sailor's Rights.”

It was a remark of Mr. Jefferson, I think, that in the Continental Congress, John Adams was the Colossus of the War of our Independence. That bold and daring spirit swept away like cobwebs the arguments of the opposition—and his noble appeals animated and inspired his hearers. With equal propriety may it be said, that Henry Clay was the Colossus of the second War of Independence. He it was, who infused new life into the Administration—animated its counsels, directed its energies, and sustained its measures; and his manly and noble spirit impressed itself upon the deliberations of the Nation's Council; and such was the confidence of the wise Madison, that he tendered to him the office of Commander in Chief the United States Army—a post which, for reasons highly honorable and delicate, was declined.

The war was declared—and though for a time disastrous, its closing scenes redeemed the American character. Chauncey, Perry, McDonough, Macomb, Scott, Jackson—Champlain, Erie, Lundy's Lane, and New Orleans, can never be forgotten.

During the war Mr. Clay was transferred to Ghent, to assist the Commissioners in forming a Treaty of Peace. In the debates of that Convention, Mr. Clay took a most decided part; and for his noble stand in behalf of western rights, he deserves the deep gratitude of every western man. I refer to his course in reference to the exclusive right of navigation of the Mississippi River.

It will be remembered by my hearers, that by the Treaty of 1783, and that of 1794, commonly called Mr. Jay's Treaty, the Mississippi River was open as well to the subjects of Great Britain, as to the citizens of the United States. At both of these periods, Spain was entitled to the sovereignty of the whole western bank of the river, and to the eastern bank as far as the 31st degree of north latitude. The United States were entitled to the sovereignty of the eastern bank above this point, to the boundary line between the territory of the United States, and of Great Britain; which, according to the Treaty of 1783, was to be drawn from the Lake of the Woods, which would, as was then believed, strike the river below its source. If such was the case, Great Britain owning territory at the source of the river, would be entitled to free access at its mouth.

At the Treaty of Ghent, the aspect of affairs was materially changed. Spain had relinquished all her rights to the United States; and it was ascertained by actual survey, that a line drawn from the Lake of the Woods, would not strike the Mississippi River—consequently Great Britain could lay no claim to the right of navigation, as the river was exclusively within our jurisdiction.

Mr. Gallatin proposed to surrender the right of navigation in exchange for a right to fish within British jurisdiction. Mr. Adams and Mr. Bayard concurred with Mr. Gallatin, thus composing a majority of the delegation.

Against the surrender of western rights, Mr. Clay loudly protested; declared he would sign no such Treaty, with such a provision in it—but would go home—appeal to the people, and use his influence to have the Treaty rejected, and let the war go on. Mr. Bayard finally agreed with Mr. Clay, and the provision was not inserted.

What a debt of gratitude do we not owe to this far-sighted and patriotic Statesman? Who can tell what troubles and difficulties—what border feuds—what constant sources of national irritation have been avoided? The noble Father of Waters is now ploughed by a thousand steamers, bearing the rich products of our soil; and o'er these proudly float the stars and stripes. The prow of no foreign vessel divides its waters, and

no foreign nations rival us in the trade of this great Valley of the West.

This is not the place or the occasion to refer to the great subject of Protection to American Labor; to the advancement of which Mr. Clay devoted so many years of his useful and honored life, with so much zeal and earnestness, as caused his cotemporaries to bestow upon him the proud appellation of the "Father of the American System."

Acting as he did upon the benevolent principle, that he "who causes a blade of grass to grow, where none grew before," is entitled to rank among the benefactors of mankind—he believed it to be the policy of our country, to turn its labor into diversified and varied channels, and thus give constant occupation and ample remuneration to all; and with that enthusiasm which formed so prominent a trait in his character, he pressed his measures.

Able and eloquent Statesmen differed with him in reference to National Policy. The records of their views and arguments are a portion of our history; and I would offend against your sense of propriety, were I but to glance at the subject. To speak of these eloquent efforts in support of his own policy—with strict impartiality, I could not. We are here to-day to mingle together o'er the grave of departed worth, our feelings of reverence and love, for the services, of one whom all admire; and cold must be the heart, that does not see and feel enough in that life and character to admire, without striking one string that could produce one inharmonious note.

So too, in regard to Internal Improvements. He saw this young and growing country, with its thousand miles of sea coast—with its majestic inland oceans—with its mighty rivers, flowing into the Gulfs of St. Lawrence and Mexico; and with a Statesman's pride, he strove to develop its boundless resources—strove to cement this blessed Union—the source of our national prosperity; and by roads and canals, bind the people together "with hooks of steel."

Here he encountered the opposition of that pure and wise Chief Magistrate, James Monroe, on a constitutional point of difference—yet, with his characteristic boldness, he manfully contended for what he deemed right. The Cumberland Road is a monument to his efforts; and the traveler, as he now threads his way across the mountains, o'er which has been constructed a greater than an Alpine way, will find a monument of stone, surmounted by the Genius of Liberty, and bearing the name of HENRY CLAY.

His comprehensive patriotism, bounded by no section, but including in

its wide range the sterile coast of the North—the rich savannahs of the South—the crowded cities of the East—the boundless prairies of the West, could, in the glowing language of the British Bard, exclaim—

“Bid Harbors open—public ways extend;
 Bid Temples, worthier of the God ascend;
 Bid the broad arch the dangerous flood contain—
 The mole projecting, break the roaring main
 Back to its bed, the subject sea command,
 And roll obedient rivers through the land.”

But here again must we commit these to efforts impartial of history, who, with the spear of Ithuriel, will give shape and color to every object which he touches.

Would that I could dwell in detail on other important events in the life of the great departed. Fain would I describe to you the agitation that pervaded our land, when our sister State of Missouri was knocking at the doors of our Union for admittance. Fain would I depict the gloom that shrouded every patriot's countenance, when the fires of disunion were kindled in our midst; when the exciting subject of Slavery was rocking this Union to its very centre; when sectional feelings were aroused; when the great interests of this government, on which are centered all the hopes of man, were in fearful jeopardy. And fain would I point you to those untiring and indefatigable efforts—to that high and holy love of country, which were displayed by Kentucky's most cherished son, and which were the means, under Providence, of averting from our land the horrors of civil war.

Fain would I love to dwell upon that ardent love of liberty, which espoused the cause of the suffering patriots of South America—that love for the great family of man, which induced the “great Commoner of our age” to encounter the sarcasms of the selfish politicians of that day, and boldly propose the recognition of the independence of the South American Republics. To HENRY CLAY, not to George Canning, belongs the honor of calling the South American States into existence.

The speeches made by him at that time, fell, it is true, unheeded upon the American ear—but Bolivar read them at the head of his army, and many a patriot at the base of the Andes, rushed to the contest, breathing the name of HENRY CLAY.

Fain would I love to dwell on his efforts in behalf of struggling Greece—and fain would I remind you, that amid the long buried ruins of the Parthenon, the name of HENRY CLAY is known and honored.

Fain would I refer to the Treaties of Amity and Commerce, made by him whilst Secretary of State—more in number than those of any other Secretary up to that period of our history—but I must hurry onward.

The country was again in difficulty and danger. The hydra head of nullification was raised in our midst. Opposition to the laws of the Union was boldly proclaimed. A gallant State, whose soil had been drenched by the best blood of the Revolution; a State whose Marion and Pinkney, whose Laurens and Rutledge, had devoted their lives to the cause of American Independence.

That devoted *Patriot*, whose love of country was only equalled by his iron will, **ANDREW JACKSON**—a man who never faltered in his purpose—patriotically proclaimed, that the laws of the Union should at all hazards be maintained; and to enforce them, he sent a gallant brother in arms, the present Commander-in-Chief of the U. S. Army, to South Carolina.

The people of our country rushed to the support of the Hero of New Orleans. The Palmetto State armed herself to repel what she deemed an invasion. Bayonets bristled in her cities, and martial music was heard in her streets—and the time rapidly drew near when a hostile collision must ensue. Dark and portentous was the horizon; deep rolled the distant thunder; the lightning's fiery flashes played around, and the ship of State was tossed upon the billows of a stormy ocean. Despair filled the patriot's heart; the enemies of our free institutions sneered and rejoiced that the last Republic on earth was destined to a speedy dissolution.

But then, amid the howling of the storm—amid the roaring of the waves—amid the pealings of Heaven's artillery, I saw a form leap forth—aye, in the fierce flashing of the storm,

"I saw his proud, undaunted form,
Upon the quivering deck,
As with his eyes on Union's Star,
By his unswerving skill afar,
We shunned the threatening wreck."

It is not for me to refer to the political campaign of 1840, in which Mr. Clay, although defeated before the nominating Convention at Harrisburg, rendered such eminent services to his party; nor to the events that succeeded that fierce political contest; nor to the catastrophe that befel the people, when, in one short month, the peans of rejoicing were exchanged for the funeral notes of sadness; nor of the subsequent course of the acting President. Suffice it to say, that it having been clearly demonstrated, that he could no longer be useful to his country, he, like a Roman veteran,

claimed an honorable discharge. Forty years of faithful service entitled him to that; he bade adieu to the scene of his triumphs, and retired to the pleasant lawns and classic shades of Ashland.

And here, whilst in the bosom of his family—in the midst of an affectionate people, by whom he was beloved—amid his flocks and herds, let us pause, and contemplate for a moment the moral and intellectual character of the Sage of Ashland.

Possessing a vigorous intellect by nature, well-framed by subsequent culture, Mr. Clay was a Republican and a philanthropist, from the very dawn of his character. The study of the law he pursued under Chancellor Wythe, a man of Roman stamp, in Rome's best age.

As a leader in a deliberative body, he had no equal in his day. Boldness, ardor, address, chivalry, were his prominent traits. Reverses could not crush, nor defeat discourage him; nay, they seemed to give new strength, for he leapt like Anteus from the earth.

In victory or disaster, he was ever the same—frank, bold, fearless, where duty lead him—he seemed to be born to command, and lead his gallant cohorts to battle, caring little whether he encountered one or twenty "Presidents;" and whether the issue was defeat or victory, he was ever on hand to console or to applaud. He was ever prompt in decision, and firm in action.

His, too, was a heroic, self-sacrificing spirit. Never did *self* seem to animate him. Is he disappointed at the result of a nominating Convention, like that of Harrisburg, in 1839, his response is, "what is a public man worth who is not ready to sacrifice himself for his country?"

Do the clouds of calumny and detraction lower around him—his answer is, as in a letter to the speaker who now addresses you—"I write this letter for your satisfaction, and not for publication. I would rather submit to the effects of calumny, than betray any undue sensitiveness about it. I have outlived other calumnies, and by the blessing of God, will survive this and all others."

Do friends counsel *policy* in reference to political action—they are met with the noble response, fit to be emblazoned on every lintel and door-post in our land—"I had rather be right than President."

His eloquence, in a great degree, resembled Patrick Henry, another of Hanover's gifted sons. It was bold, fearless, soul-inspiring; it was literally a flame of fire, warming and kindling every generous emotion of the heart.

With the most winning manners—with the most pure and generous impulses, he was idolized by all who came under the spell of his magic

voice. No man in our day and generation ever had so many tried and unselfish friends.

As a patriot, history will place him in the very foremost ranks, next and second only to Washington.

Whenever the nation was in peril, he soared above the passions and miserable jealousies of the hour, and knew no North, no South, no East, no West—nothing but his country.

He was as open as the day—no man doubted what his views of public policy were—they were transparent to the public eye. He was indeed “the noblest Roman of them all.”

It was a beautiful eulogy of a political opponent on the floor of the House of Representatives, in paying the last tribute of affection to his memory; I mean the Hon. Mr. Breckenridge, of Kentucky—for says this eloquent Statesman:

“If I were to write his epitaph, I would inscribe, as the highest eulogy, upon the stone that shall mark his last resting place, ‘Here lies a man, who was in public life more than fifty years, and never attempted to deceive the people.’”

A few short years ago, a voice of weeping and lamentation came across the waters. Then were heard the mournful strains of that

“Harp that once thro’ Tara’s Halls,
The soul of Music shed”

Those notes told of Erin—the Green Isle of the Ocean, clad in sackcloth, and ashes; that the Heavens were brass, and the Earth iron; that the Almighty had let loose one of his most fearful agents of destruction—worse than the earthquake, the tornado, or the pestilence—gaunt, grim, stalking famine; that the living and the dead were laying side by side in the hovel of penury; that the famished infant was languishing upon the cold and motionless bosom of affection; that the muscles of the strong were shrinking; that day after day, the King of Terrors was reaping his dread harvest, and there was no help.

Poor, starving, famishing Ireland, stretched out her attenuated and shrunken hand; she raised her feeble voice for aid.

In the Crescent City, in hopes of regaining shattered health, is an *old man*, near three score and ten. No official station is his; no pomp or pageants surround him; no parasites attend him. He is a plain, honest, Republican. He had, but a short time before, been rejected by the people, for the highest office in their gift. He heard that voice, and those plaintive notes, and his generous heart was touched. He knew that it

was Ireland's *Montgomery* who crimsoned the walls of Quebec with his dying blood—and the bones of whose sons, fallen in the great struggle for our liberty, now lie mingled with the soil of every State, from New England to Palo Alto—and he came to the rescue.

His voice was heard; its clarion notes resounded through our land, pleading like angels, trumpet-tongued, for the sick, the starving, the dying—and it found an echo in every generous heart. The humane, the charitable, the merciful, contributed cheerfully to this noble cause.

The voice of kindness and sympathy was heard by our Legislators—and lo! an American vessel of war spread its white sails to catch the freshening breeze, with the stars and the stripes proudly floating o'er it—bearing not the weapons of war and devastation, but bread for the starving, and clothing for the naked, of poor, desolate, afflicted Erin.

Time passed by, and our common country was in imminent peril. The acquisition of new territory opened again the exciting subject of slavery—a far more serious crisis than that of the Missouri, or the Compromise of 1833 had arisen. Section had been arrayed against section; jealousies—heart-burning alienation, existed between the North and the South. All fraternal feeling seemed to have departed, and the doctrine of a southern confederacy was boldly broached. The Potomac was destined to become the boundary line between the two great Commonwealths; and this great nation was to be rent in twain. Already were the initiatory measures taken to effect this parricidal purpose.

But there was a sleepless eye that watched the current of public affairs; twice had he saved the country from domestic broils—and although loaded with the weight of years and growing infirmities, he left his own delightful fireside, to enter again the arena of public life.

How he toiled, how he labored, how he wielded the powers of his eloquence and address, to conciliate opposing factions, is known to all. The adjustment measures of that Congress are of too recent an occurrence for me to dwell upon. The storm has passed, but the ground-swell attests the violence of that storm. Whatever differences of opinion may exist in reference to a portion of these measures, they are now the law of the land; and they have poured oil on the troubled waters, and caused the bright sunshine of peace and prosperity still to beam upon our land.

There was one scene that took place at Washington a few short months ago, that must have been of surpassing sublimity.

An exile from his Father-land—whose country had been crushed by the iron heel of the Cossack—who had been immured in the walls of the

Musselman's prison, arrived on our shores. An ovation was his, only equalled by that of the youthful stranger, who, during the times that tried men's souls, left the vine-clad hills of his own delightful France, "to fight for freedom in freedom's farthest land."

Like the welcome to the gallant Lafayette, around the brave Hungarian, comes a congregated nation. Old men bless, and children reverence him; the lovely come out to look upon him; the learned deck their halls to greet him; the rulers of the land rise up to do him honor. His journey to the Capitol is a scene worthy of record, as that of a Roman Council in Rome's most palmy day. He pleads the cause of his oppressed country with undoubted eloquence and power. He asks our people to afford him "material aid." Carried away by enthusiasm, and by ardor for popular liberty, our people are about forsaking the paths of peace and prosperity, which the "Great Father of his country" so plainly marked out.

At this interesting crisis of his mission, an interview was sought with the "Sage of Ashland." The Sage had ever worshipped at the shrine of Liberty—had ever been one of its most devoted votaries.

"As a dying man," to use his own words, he addressed the gallant exile. He reiterated the long-established doctrines of *non-intervention* in the affairs of Europe, as best for this country—best for Europe—and best for the cause of Liberty; and clasping the hand of the eloquent stranger, added, with his most impressive tones, "that on every day his life was spared, his fervent prayer should ascend to Almighty God, for the protection of the noble exile, and for his restoration to his native land."

No wonder Kossuth's bosom swelled with unutterable emotion; no wonder tears rolled down the cheeks of the great Kentuckian—for it must have been most inexpressibly touching.

Failing health now admonished that soon the silver cord would be loosed, and the golden bowl be broken. With a full knowledge that "the days of the years of his pilgrimage were drawing near their close," he transmitted to the Governor of Kentucky his resignation as Senator, to take effect from the first of September next.

From the memorable session of 1850, Mr. Clay's health gradually declined. The efforts made by him at that trying time, proved too much for his wasted strength. His object in coming to Washington, was, if necessary, to defend the Compromise measures, if attacked: but he was unable to participate in any of the debates—for during the long and dreary winter, he was confined to his chamber.

"The chamber where the good man meets his fate, is privileged beyond the walks of ordinary life."

If ever there was an instance, to which this beautiful and pious sentiment was peculiarly appropriate, it is that which we have here assembled to deplore; nay, not to deplore—for what was there in the rare, harmonious, moral and intellectual accomplishments to deplore, but their loss.

His worldly affairs were all arranged; his temporal matters disposed of; his last hour was rapidly approaching; he saw it approach with undisturbed serenity; he counted the moments as they passed, and beheld that his last sands were falling. His great object now was to prepare "to meet his God." Death is at all times a fearful thing—

"It is a dread, a fearful thing to die."

The warrior on the ensanguined battle-field, amid the smoke, the din, the excitement of the strife, when battling for the liberties of his country, if he dies, dies a glorious death—for we have been told,

"*Dulce et decorum est, pro patria mori.*"

The elder Pitt, when using his highest intellectual powers, espousing the cause of struggling freemen, and carried away from the Council Chamber to the cold grave, has his name deservedly embalmed in history.

John Quincy Adams, on the floor of Congress, when rising to address the Speaker, but reclining in syncope—and there, at the post of duty, meeting the King of Terrors, will ever be cherished and honored by patriotic hearts.

But to my mind, the spectacle of an aged Statesman, reclining on that couch from which he is never to rise; at peace with God and man; awaiting with meek and patient acquiescence, the summons; bowing with the humility of a child to the discipline of the rod—is one on which methinks men and angels would love to dwell.

The holy minister of God tells us, that at his request, he administered to him the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. "This last act, more than any other, sheds glory around his character. This is all that can be enrolled of him in the archives of eternity.

He tells us, that being extremely feeble, and desirous of having his mind undiverted, no persons were present but his son and servant. There, in that still chamber—on a week-day noon—the tides of life all flowing around—three disciples of the Saviour—the minister of God, the dying Statesman, and his servant—partakers of the like precious faith, commemorated the Saviour's dying love.

He joined in the blessed sacrament with great feeling and solemnity—now pressing his hands together, and now spreading them forth, as words of the service expressed the feelings, desires, supplications, and thanksgivings of his heart.

It is in the moments of approaching dissolution, that the ruling passion is oftentimes displayed.

Elijah and Elisha stood by Jordan—and the aged seer said unto his young disciple—"ask what I shall do for thee, before I am taken away from thee." And Elisha said—"I pray thee let a double portion of thy spirit rest upon me." And he said—"thou hast asked a hard thing—nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so with thee—but if not, it shall not be so."

Then came the chariot of fire, and the horses of fire, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind unto Heaven; but he dropped his mantle to the young Elisha.

Haller, the great physician, nearing the confines of the unknown world, feeling his pulse, exclaimed, "My friend, the artery ceases to beat."

Keats, the ill-fated but gifted child of genius, when asked, a little while before his death, how he felt, answered—"better—I feel the daisies growing o'er me."

Napoleon—the "setter up and puller down of Kings"—heard in the beating of that terrible storm that howled around Longwood, the roar of the cannon, and exclaimed—"Head—Army."

But the mind of Henry Clay was roaming amid the scenes of his happy youth and early manhood—wandering o'er the slashes of Hanover, and the shady groves of Ashland.

He murmured in a gentle tone, "*Mother?—mother?—wife?—dear wife?*"—and with a glow of paternal feeling, outstretching his attenuated fingers, and clasping the hands of his affectionate son, exclaimed, "do not leave me—I am going;" and in another moment his ransomed spirit was joining in the melody of the Heavenly Choir—and methought I heard angels, arch-angels, seraphim, and cherubim, shout the "*welcome home.*"

So have I oft seen, on the banks of yonder Lake, the glorious orb of day arise in its morning beauty. As it culminated towards the meridian, dark and lowering clouds hovered around it; but as it descended the Western slope, it seemed to grow brighter and brighter, and larger and larger, until, in a blaze of glory, it descended beneath the horizon, and left a grateful, *long, lingering, twilight behind.*

Upon the review of such a life, may we not say, "That life is long which answers life's great end?"

And now that he is gone, full of years, and full of honors, to his rest,
and to his blessed reward, may we not all feel that he is gone—not like
one—

“who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams”—

but like one—

“Life’s duty done—so sinks the *Clay*!
Light from its load the spirit flies,
Whilst Heaven and Earth combine to say,
How blest the righteous, when he dies.”





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